

Green (S.A.)

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Author*



A BRIEF ACCOUNT

OF SOME OF THE

EARLY SETTLERS OF GROTON,

MASSACHUSETTS.

BEING THE APPENDIX TO "GROTON EPITAPHS."

BY SAMUEL A. GREEN, M.D.



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G.A.G.



EARLY SETTLERS OF GROTON.

DURING many years Groton was a frontier town, situated relatively a long distance from Boston. At that period there were but few settlements in the colony, and the younger generations were wont to live near the home of their childhood. The population of the town, through the first century of its existence, was made up largely of the descendants of its founders and early settlers. In this Appendix, I purpose to give a short account of some of the families living here during that time, including a brief notice of the petitioners for the plantation of Groton, and of a few other persons connected with the history of the town. It will be seen that a considerable number of them came from Watertown and Lynn.

Bancroft. Penjamine Bancroft, the son of Thomas, of Reading, is the ancestor of the families of this name, living in Groton and its vicinity. He married Anna, daughter of John and Anna (Tarbell) Lawrence, of Lexington, and had nine children. He lived for a while at Charlestown, but afterward, about the year 1728, removed to Groton, where he died July 21, 1787, aged 86 years, and his widow also, April 3, 1790, aged 87 years. He was a tanner by trade, and lived a short distance south of the Unitarian Church, on the east side of the Great Road. His tannery was on the opposite side of the way. The stone powder magazine, used by the State during the Revolution, was situated on his land.

Benjamin, the eldest child, followed the occupation of his father, and lived on the old homestead. He was town treasurer and a deacon of the church, besides holding other positions of trust. He

married Alice, daughter of William and Mary (Farnsworth) Tarbell, and had eight children. His wife died November 29, 1781, aged 51 years, and he died October 27, 1804, aged 80 years.

Edmund, the second child, removed to that part of Groton, now Pepperell, where he carried on farming. He was town treasurer of Pepperell for twenty years, and a representative in the General Court. He married, December 30, 1747, for his first wife, Elizabeth Atherton, of Harvard, who died October 6, 1755, and he married, in the year 1758, for his second wife, Mrs. Rachel (Howard) Barron, widow of Jonathan Barron and daughter of Samuel Howard, of Chelmsford. She died June 3, 1784, aged 54 years, and he married, for the third time, Mrs. Phebe (Lawrence) Bancroft, widow of Jonathan Bancroft, of Salem, and daughter of Colonel William and Susanna (Prescott) Lawrence, of Groton. Edmund died October 25, 1806, aged 79 years, and his widow, November 21, 1808, aged 74 years. He had four children by his first marriage, and eight by his second. Dr. Amos Bancroft, a graduate of Harvard College in the class of 1791, and for many years a distinguished physician of Groton, was a son of the second wife.

Deacon Benjamin and Edmund were the only sons of Benjamin Bancroft who grew up to manhood.

Barron. Two brothers of this name, sons of Ellis and [Grace?] Barron, of Watertown, were original proprietors of Groton; Ellis, the elder brother, owning a fifteen-acre right, and John, the other, a seven-acre right. Ellis married Hannah, widow of Timothy Hawkins, of Watertown, and had several children, before coming to Groton, where others were born. John also had a family, but now for a long time there has been no representative of the name in the town. Elias Barron, of Groton, was in Captain Lovewell's fight, May 8, 1725, at Pigwacket, where he was wounded and afterward lost. The sum of £30 was allowed his family, by the General Court, June 17, 1725; and according to the record in the printed "Journal," of December 21, 1726, it appears that his widow's name was Priscilla.

Samuel Barron left a small bequest to the town, which still keeps his name in grateful remembrance. The following is an extract from his will, dated February 5, 1753:—

"My Will and plesuer is that the first Church of Christ in Groton should have sum thing oute of my Estate for the poore of saied Church and I do hereby

Give to the said Church the sum of thirteen pounds five shillings and four pence Lawfull money to be paid to the said Church out of my Estate by my Executer within one year next after my decease to be Lett out to Interest by the said Church and the Interest to be appropriated for the Bennefit of the poore of said Church as the Church shall order but the principle never to be deminshed."

Blood. Three of the petitioners for the plantation of Groton, viz., Richard, John, and Robert, bore this name, and all three were sons of James and Ellen Blood, of Concord. Another brother, James, was an early proprietor of the town. Richard was the only one of these brothers that lived in Groton, and he is the ancestor of most of the name in this neighborhood. He was the largest proprietor in the town, owning a sixty-acre right, and was one of the first board of selectmen chosen by the inhabitants, and also town clerk in the year 1668. He married Isabel —, and had Mary, who died April 19, 1662; James, who was killed by the Indians, September 13, 1692; Nathaniel, who married, June 13, 1670, Hannah, daughter of James and Elizabeth (Long) Parker; Elizabeth, who married, December 1, 1686, Thomas Tarbell, the third of the name in Groton; and Joseph, who was an original proprietor of the town. Richard, the father, lived in the district called "Nod," and died December 7, 1683.

Bridge. The name of London Bridge will have more interest for the inhabitants of Groton, when it is known that he was a resident of the town, and that he remembered it in his will. This instrument, bearing date May 23, 1775, is on file in the Middlesex Probate Office at East Cambridge, and was presented for probate, January 25, 1776. The following are extracts from it: —

"I do hereby give and Bequeath the sd sum of Thirteen pounds six shillings and eight pence to the Church of Christ in Groton afores^d the Interest of which Sum is to be annually given to the poor of sd Chh. at the Discretion of their Com^{tee}

He then makes provision for the payment of his debts and a small bequest to Captain Henry Farwell, and adds: —

"and if that should not be sufficient for those purposes my will is that my Executer take so much out of the above given to the Chh. as to Defray the Charges Aboves^d and the Remainder be applyed by the Chh. in manner as Aboves^d for their poor."

Cooper. Timothy Cooper was one of the original petitioners for the plantation of Groton, and his name appears in the first list of selectmen, appointed by the General Court. He married Sarah, daughter of Joseph and Hester (Pierce) Morse, of Watertown, and had four children. In the inventory of his estate, on file in the Middlesex Probate Office at East Cambridge, it is recorded that he was "Sleaine by the Indeins the Second day of march 1675-6." This is the date of the first attack on the town in King Philip's War.

Davis. Dolor Davis was a petitioner for the plantation of Groton, and one of the first board of selectmen appointed by the General Court. He came to this country from England, about the year 1640, and lived for a while at Barnstable. He is the ancestor of many of the name now living in Middlesex and Worcester counties. He married Margery, sister of Major Simon Willard, and at one time was a resident of Concord. He probably lived here but a short time ; he died at Barnstable in the year 1673.

Farnsworth. Matthias Farnsworth, the progenitor of the numerous families in Groton bearing this name, came from Lynn. He was an original proprietor of the town, and owned a twenty-acre right. His farm was situated on both sides of the road leading to Harvard, a little south of James's brook, more than a mile from the village. He was living at Lynn in the year 1657, and at Groton in 1664, though he may have been a resident of each place earlier than these respective dates. He died in the latter part of the year 1689, aged 77 years. The following is a copy of his will, on file in the Middlesex Probate Office at East Cambridge :—

Groton Jenewarey 15th: 1688-9 and in the 4 yere of the Rain of King Jams the sacond I mathyas farnworth sen of groton in the county of midlsix in new england aged about 77 yers being wall considrat and of sound and parfit Judg-
ment and understanding thanks be to god for it I being sensabl of my many
frailties & unsartanty of my natueral lif and knowing what disaduantage many
times hapens for want of a Right sating the hous in order being desirous to
ackt and satl things that consarns me doe mak conshans and doe daclare this
prasant instrument to be my last will & tastement in manar and form as foloweth
making uoyd all formar wills ather by word or dead but first I Commit my soul
to all myt god my Creater hoping I shal Rasae full pardon of all my sins
thow Jasus Christ and I commit my bodey to the earth from whans it was
taken to be beured in such deasant manar as my exsecters shall see meet and

1. first to the distrebiting my eastat I doe giue to my beloued wif so long as she liues a widow won third of my whol astat and the moueablz within the hous I
2. doe laue to hur to daspose as shee pleases and sacondly I doe giue to my son mathyas farnworth for his full porshan that fwe akker Right which his deed spasefyes and a peese of madow called by the name of half moon madow and twanty akekers of land lying neer a plase called by the nam of Prascots olde mill and this to be counted to be his full porshan unlass he meets with malistation by any ralations of his and if so then I will and giue to my son mathyas my hom stall that I now dwall upon with hous & barn and that hom stall that my son mathyas now liues on to Ratum in seed thare of
3. and thirdly I giue to my son John farnworth that fwe akar Right that his deed spasefyes and tan shilins more to be Payed of the astat for his full porshan
4. fourthly I giue to my son bangeman farnworth that part of my land lying on the out sid of my hom stall fans at the lower end of the lot and twanty akekers at the plas neer prescotts old mill and six akkers of madow lying at south madow and this for his porshan
5. fiftly for my son samewall & Jonathan farnworth I doe giue the Rast of my land and madow that is undasposed on lying at the old mill for thare porshan

and I giue my daughter Robison won cow and to my daughter thacher I giue twenty shilins and to my daughter Stoon won cow and twanty shilins and to my daughter abigall farnworth twalue pound for her porshan and as to the Rast of my eastat undasposed of I leaue in the hand of my exsectters to daspose of to my wif or children as thay think to be most Rason I mak Chois of my son mathyas farnworth with nathanil lawrins san & Jonas prescott for exsackters this taken from his own mouth syned and sealed in the prasants of us

his
mathyas **M** farnworth sen
mark
nathannil lawrance
Jonas Prescott
his
Nicklas **N** huchins
mark

also I giue my loam & tacklins for waring to my son mathyas farnworth
X^{br.} 17. 1689 Charlestowne

Nathan^{ll} Larrance & Jonas Prescott appearing in Court made oath yt they were p'sent when Mathias ffarnworth Deced signed sealed and published this as his last will & Testament, and y^t he was of sound judgment and of disposing minde when he did y^e same and yt they sett theire hands there to as witnesses wth Nicolas Hutchins

as att.

Sam^{ll}. Phipps Cler

His wife's name was Mary, and they had ten children. The list of them given below is compiled from different sources. It is probable that his "daughter Robison" was the wife of James Robertson, or Robinson; and in that case, her name was Eliza-

beth, and probably she was born in England. James Robertson, an original proprietor of the town, married his wife, January 16, 1667, and she died December 22, 1729, aged 82 years. I am not sure about the order of the births of his children, but I suggest the following: Elizabeth [?], who probably married James Robertson; Joseph, born November 17, 1657, at Lynn, and died February 20, 1686-7; Mary, born October 11, 1660, at Lynn, and married, April 11, 1676, Samuel Thatcher, of Watertown; Matthias, born at Groton; John, who married, December 8, 1686, Hannah, daughter of John and Sarah (Eliot) Aldis, of Dedham, and had nine children; Benjamin, who married Mary, daughter of Jonas and Mary (Loker) Prescott, and had ten children; Samuel, who married, December 12, 1706, widow Mary (Whitcomb) Willard; and had three children; Abigail, born January 17, 1671, and probably married John Hutchins, of Groton; Sarah [?], who perhaps married Simon Stone; and Jonathan, born June 1, 1675, married Ruth —, and had fourteen children.

John, one of the sons named above, was an influential man in all town affairs. He was an ensign in the militia, a selectman, a representative to the General Court from the year 1708 to 1714 inclusive, excepting 1711, and a deacon in the church. In the autumn of 1711, he was in command of one of the eighteen garrisons in the town. The name of Matthias Farnsworth, of Groton, appears in a list of prisoners in the hands of the French and Indians in Canada, March 5, 1710-11, though there is nothing in the record to show when he was captured. He was probably the son of Matthias, Jr., and, if so, he was a young man about twenty years old at the date of the list.

The first settlement of Charlestown, New Hampshire,—then known as Number 4,—was made in the year 1740, by three brothers, Samuel, David, and Stephen Farnsworth, natives of Groton. They all became leading men in the town, and distinguished themselves on several occasions in fights with the Indians. Samuel Farnsworth, the eldest brother, was killed in a skirmish, May 2, 1746; David was taken prisoner by a party of Indians, April 20, 1757, and carried to Canada. He managed to escape, and reached home, probably soon after his capture. Stephen, the youngest brother, also had his bitter experience with the savages. He was captured April 19, 1746, and taken to Montreal, where he remained seventeen months, when he was

exchanged. His health was so broken down by the hardships of his captivity that he never fully regained it. He died September 6, 1771, leaving behind him the example of a brave man and a useful citizen.

Farrington. Matthew Farrington was one of the petitioners for the plantation of Groton, and a member of the first board of selectmen appointed by the General Court. He was a son of Edmund Farrington, of Lynn, and was born in England.

Gilson. Joseph Gilson was one of the original proprietors of the town, and owned a nine-acre right. He married, November 18, 1660, Mary Caper, at Chelmsford, and removed from that town to Groton before March 5, 1665-6. He died in the summer of 1676, at Concord, where he went, probably, when Groton was deserted by its inhabitants. An inventory of his estate is on file in the Middlesex Probate Office at East Cambridge. He left five children, viz., Mary, born November 17, 1662, at Chelmsford; Timothy; Joseph, born March 8, 1666-7, at Groton, married twice, and had five children by each wife; Sarah, born June 25, 1669, at Groton; and John, born April 23, 1674, at Groton, married Sarah —, and had five children. Both Joseph and John lived and died at Groton, and John's widow married, May 17, 1709, for her second husband, Richard Warner, by whom she had four children. Joseph Gilson, a grandson of the original proprietor, was one of the seven Groton men with Captain Lovewell in his fight at Pigwacket, and the only one of the seven who escaped unhurt. One Joseph Gilson of Groton, presented a petition to the General Court, June 11, 1764, "representing his Services and Sufferings, for his Country praying a Compensation."

Haven. Richard Haven was one of the petitioners for the plantation of Groton. He was living in Lynn as early as the year 1645, and is said to have come from the west of England. His will was proved June 14, 1703.

Hinckley. Thomas Hinckley, one of the selectmen first appointed by the General Court, was probably a son of Samuel Hinckley, of Scituate, and afterward of Barnstable. If this sup-

position be correct, he was the Governor of Plymouth Colony from the year 1681 to 1692.

Lakin. William Lakin, the ancestor of the numerous families of this name that have lived at Groton, died December 10, 1672, at the advanced age of 90 or 91 years. He was born in England, and came to this country with his daughter-in-law and her two sons, William and John Lakin. Mr. Butler, in his excellent "History," (page 273), says that the family came from Redington, but as there is no such place in England, perhaps the parish of Ridlington is meant. They early settled at Reading, where the name was sometimes spelled Laukin. The two brothers were original proprietors of Groton, each owning a twenty-acre right.

William Lakin married Lydia, daughter of Abraham Brown, of Watertown, and had Lydia, born 1650; Mary, born 1652; William, born May 6, 1655; John, born January 3, 1658; Jonathan, born June 28, 1661; Abraham, born January 10, 1664; William, born May, 1665; Abraham, born September 11, 1667; and Eliab, born January 8, 1669. The first five were born at Reading, and the others at Groton.

John Lakin married Mary —, and had the following children, born at Groton, on the dates set against their respective names: Sarah, February 4, 1661-2; William, May 12, 1664; Abigail, March 13, 1666-7; Joseph, April 14, 1670; Benjamin, November 6, 1672; and Josiah, September 14, 1675.

William Lakin was appointed October 15, 1673, Lieutenant of the military company of the town, and his brother John was confirmed by the Governor and Council, July 13, 1689, as Ensign of the same company, though they may have acted as officers before these dates.

The murderous assault made by the Indians on the town, July 27, 1694, was begun at the house of Lieutenant William Lakin, who lived somewhere in the neighborhood of Chicopee Row. Isaac Lakin, a grandson of William, was wounded in Lovewell's fight with the Indians.

The following entry is found in the printed "Journal" of the Massachusetts House of Representatives, for January 10, 1760: —

"A Petition of Oliver Laken of Groton, in the County of Middlesex, shewing that he was a Soldier in the Pay of the Province Anno 1758, and was on the 20th Day of July the same Year, Captivated by the Indian Enemy, suffered many &

great Hardships, and was obliged to borrow a Sum of Money to purchase his Freedom from Captivity; he therefore prays he may be allowed the Sum of Money he borrowed; also the Charges of his Passage home, and a further Allowance for his Loss of Time and Sufferings &c."

The answer to this petition is found in the proceedings of January 12, and is as follows:—

"The Committee appointed to consider the Petition of *Oliver Lakin*, Reported thereon.

"Read and accepted in Part, *viz. Resolved*. That the Sum of *eight Pounds*, be allowed and paid out of the public Treasury to *William Lawrence*, Esq; for the Use of the Petitioner, in full Consideration for his Services and Sufferings therein mentioned.

"Sent up for Concurrence."

The petitioner was a son of William and Miriam Lakin, and a great-grandson of Ensign John Lakin.

Lawrence. The ancestor of this numerous family was John Lawrence, who was born at Wisset, England, where he was baptized October 8, 1609. He married Elizabeth —, and had thirteen children, all with one exception born at Watertown, where he settled on coming to this country. His daughter Elizabeth was born in Boston. The date and the place of his marriage are not known. He was an original proprietor of Groton, owning a twenty-acre right; two of his sons were also original proprietors, Nathaniel having a ten-acre right, and Joseph a five-acre right. His house and land at Watertown were sold about the year 1662, and in the same year the name is found in the Groton records. John's wife, Elizabeth, died August 29, 1663, at Groton, and he married, November 2, 1664, for his second wife, Susanna, daughter of William Batchelder, of Charlestown, by whom he had two daughters. John died here July 11, 1667, and his widow, July 8, 1668, at Charlestown. His second son, Nathaniel, is represented in this neighborhood at the present time by numerous descendants. He held various offices in the church and town, and was one of the first representatives to the General Court, under the charter of William and Mary, in the year 1693. He married, first, March 13, 1660-1, Sarah, daughter of John and Hannah Morse, of Dedham, and lived for a while at Sudbury, before coming to Groton. His wife died August 29, 1683, and he married, secondly, Hannah —. In advanced life he removed to that part of Cam-

bridge now Lexington, where one of his sons was living, and here he died March 12, 1746, leaving a large family. Subsequently three of his grandchildren, Thomas, William, and Amos, came from Lexington to Groton to live. Two other of John's sons, Peleg and Enosh, lived at Groton, and had families. Enosh was wounded by the Indians, probably in the attack of July 27, 1694. He afterward represented in a petition to the Governor and Council that he was a very poor man by reason of wounds received in his hands, which almost wholly disabled him from earning a livelihood for himself and family. In consequence of these representations, he was allowed exemption from taxes, October 17, 1702, and an annual pension of three pounds during life. The name Enosh is a variation from Enos, and not from Enoch, with which it is frequently confounded. This will be seen by consulting the Geneva version of the Bible, long used in preference to King James's version, by the New England men, and out of which Enosh Lawrence was undoubtedly named. In this, "Enosh" will be found where the authorized version has "Enos," in Genesis v. 6, 7, 9-11.

Longley. William Longley was among the earliest settlers of the town, and was the owner of a thirty-acre right. He was the son of Richard Longley, of Lynn, where in the town records the name is sometimes spelled Langley. He had been one of the selectmen of Lynn, and was clerk of the writs in the year 1655. He removed, about the year 1660, to Groton, where he was one of the selectmen in the year 1665, and town clerk in 1666. He died November 29, 1680, leaving a will dated six days before his death. His widow, Joanna, afterward married Benjamin Crispe, whom she survived; she died at Charlestown in the year 1698. The following is a list of his children, though probably not in the order of their birth: John, born about 1640, married Hannah —, and had several children; Elizabeth, married, September 7, 1669, James Blood, and died about 1677, leaving two daughters, Mary and Elizabeth, who married brothers named Shattuck; Anna, or Hannah, who married, June 30, 1666, Thomas Tarbell, Jr., and had several children; Mary, who married Samuel Leaman, probably of Charlestown; Sarah, born October 15, 1660, married, June 17, 1679, Thomas Rand, of Charlestown; Lydia, who married James Nutting, and had six children; and William, who married, May 15, 1673, Lydia —. He was town clerk in the year 1687,

and from 1692 till his death in 1694. William lived on the east side of the Hollis road, about a mile from the village. A melancholy interest is connected with the site, as it was here that he and his wife, with five children, were massacred by the Indians in their assault on the town, July 27, 1694. Three more of their children, Lydia, John, and Betty, were carried off by the savages, and taken to Canada. Lydia was sold to the French, and placed in the Congregation of Notre Dame, a convent in Montreal, where she embraced the Roman Catholic faith, and died July 20, 1758, at the advanced age of 84 years. Betty died soon after her capture from hunger and exposure, and John, the third child, remained with the savages for more than four years, when he was ransomed and brought away, much against his own will. At one time during his captivity, he was on the verge of starving, when an Indian kindly gave him a dog's foot to gnaw, which for the time appeased his hunger. He was known among his captors as John Angary. After he came home, his sister Lydia wrote from Canada, urging him to abjure the Protestant religion, but he remained true to his early faith.

Their grandmother, the widow of Benjamin Crispe, April 13, 1698, made her will, which was admitted to probate on the 28th of the following December, and in it she remembered these absent children as follows : —

“I give and bequeath Vnto my three Grand-Children y^t are in Captivity if they returne Vizdt three books one of y^m a bible another a Sermon booke treating of faith and the other a psalme book.”

John Longley returned about the time that his grandmother died.

In the month of July last, I was in Montreal, where I procured, through the kindness of the Mother Superior, a copy of the record from the Congregation of Notre Dame, of which the following is a translation : —

“On Tuesday, April 24, 1696, the ceremony of baptism was performed on an English girl, named Lydia Longley, who was born April 14, 1674, at Groton, a few miles from Boston in New England. She was the daughter of William Longley and Deliverance Crisp, both Protestants. She was captured in the month of July, 1680 [1694?] by the Abénaqui Indians, and has lived for the past month in the house of the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame. The godfather was M. Jacques Leber, merchant ; the godmother was Madame Marie Made-

leine Dupont, wife of M. de Maricourt, Ecuyer, Captain of a company of Marines : she named this English girl Lydia Madeleine.

[Signed]

LYDIA MADELEINE LONGLEY,
MADELEINE DUPONT,
LEBER,
M. CAILLE, *acting curate.*"

NOTE.—The date of capture in this record is written out in full, and the omission of one word would cause the mistake; *i.e.*, "mil six cent quatre-vingt," omitting *quatorze*.

Martin. The name of William Martin heads the list of petitioners for the plantation of Groton. He was an original proprietor of the town, owning a twenty-acre right. He came here at an early date from Reading, where he had been one of the selectmen. He married the widow of William Lakin, Jr.,—though neither the date nor the place of marriage is known,—and he lived near Martin's Pond, which was named after him. His wife died August 14, 1669, and he died March 26, 1672, aged about 76 years. He left a will, dated twenty days before his death, in which he bequeathed ten pounds "towards purchasing a meeting house bell for the town's use." It was sixty years, however, before the town obtained the legacy, and even then only by a suit brought against one of the legatees, who had wrongfully received a portion of Martin's estate.

Moors. Abraham Moors, the progenitor of various families bearing the name in this neighborhood, came from England, near the beginning of the last century. He was a weaver by trade, and lived in the south part of the town. He married, November 21, 1717, Elizabeth Gilson, and they had six sons and three daughters. Mr. Moors died in March, 1780, aged 87 years, and his wife December 4, 1770, aged 72 years. Their youngest son, Joseph, was in active service during a part of the French War, and served with distinction as an officer in the Revolution. He filled many positions of trust and responsibility among his townsmen, and died July 25, 1820, aged 82 years.

Nutting. John Nutting, the common ancestor of the different families in Groton bearing this name, was an original proprietor of the town, and owned a seventeen-acre right. His land lay on the northerly side of James's Brook, and his house, which was one of

the earliest garrisons, stood near the present site of Liberty Hall. It was from this garrison house that the Indian chief, on the night of March 13, 1676, "did very familiarly in appearance, call out to Capt. *Parker* that was lodged in another Garrison house," situated near where Captain Asa S. Lawrence now lives.

John Nutting married, August 28, 1650, Sarah Eggleton [?], at Woburn, where a son was born, who may have been John, mentioned below, and probably other children. A daughter, Mary, was born January 16, 1656, at Chelmsford, at which place John, James, and Mary were baptized August 3, 1656; also Sarah, born January 7, 1660, and died soon afterward.

He was one of the petitioners for the town of Chelmsford, and he removed probably from that town to Groton, where three of his children were born,—Sarah, May 29, 1663; Ebenezer, October 23, 1666; and Jonathan, October 17, 1668.

Parish. John Parish was an original proprietor of the town, and owned a five-acre right. He was one of a committee with John Page and Ensign Lawrence, chosen December 23, 1683, to prove the proprietors' title to their land. In the year 1693, he represented the town in the General Court. Thomas Parish, a son of Thomas Parish, of Cambridge, and a graduate of Harvard College in the class of 1659, was living in Groton at an early date.

Parker. In the early history of Groton, this was the most numerous family in town. James Parker and Joseph Parker, probably brothers, were original proprietors, the first named owning a fifty-acre right, and the other a twenty-acre right. James was a distinguished man, and a leader in all public affairs. A sketch of his life and a copy of his will are given in Mr. Butler's "History" (pages 281-285). He was living at Woburn in the year 1640, and he married, May 23, 1643, Elizabeth, daughter of Robert Long, of Charlestown. Their children were Elizabeth, born March 12, 1645, married — Gary; Ann, born March 5, 1647; John, born February 18, 1649; Sarah, born August 29, 1650, died next year; Joseph, born, 1651; James, born April 15, 1652; Josiah, born 1655; Samuel, born 1656; Joshua, born March 13, 1658, married Abigail (Shattuck) Morse, widow of Jonathan Morse; Zechariah, born January 14, 1659; and Eleazer, born November 9, 1660. He

married, for his second wife, Mrs. Eunice (Brooks) Carter, widow of Samuel Carter, and had a daughter Sarah, who was born December 12, 1697, after the father had reached the age of 80 years. His six oldest children were born at Woburn; before coming to Groton, he lived for a while at Chelmsford, where several others were born. He died in the year 1701, aged about 84 years. James's house lot lay on both sides of the principal street in the village, just south of the small stream which to this day is called James's Brook, named after him. His house was one of the garrisons during King Philip's War, and it was with Captain Parker that the Indian chief, on the night of March 13, 1676, talked, as mentioned in Hubbard's "Narrative." In the assault made on the town, July 27, 1694, his son James and Mary, his son's wife, were killed by the Indians, and "several" of their children carried away captives. Another son, Josiah, was a captain, and served in the war against the Indians; he was in command at Groton, July 21, 1706, when Nathaniel Healy, of Newton, one of his company, was "waylaid" and slain, together with Ebenezer Seger, also of Newton, "as they were going to Meeting On the Sabbath day." A brother of Seger's was taken captive at the same time. Joseph Parker, the other original proprietor, was probably a brother of James, and the ancestor of the most numerous branches of the family in this neighborhood. He was a large landowner in Groton, Chelmsford, and Dunstable. The town's brandmark, used probably for marking cattle, was approved by the Governor and magistrates, on his petition dated May 31, 1666. He married Margaret —, and had the following children, born at Chelmsford, on the dates set against their names: Joseph, March 30, 1653; Anna, February 2, 1655, died young; Mary, October 28, 1657; John, November 4, 1660, died October 8, 1661; Anna, November 16, 1663; Sarah, November 16, 1666, died September 15, 1704. Joseph, the father, died in the year 1690, leaving a large estate. Joseph, the son, married, first, Elizabeth —, and, secondly, November 19, 1684, Hannah Blood; he had three children by his first wife, and four by his second. He died about the year 1725.

Isaac Parker, of this town, was one of the early settlers of Charlestown, New Hampshire, where he went about the year 1740. He was taken prisoner by the Indians, April 19, 1746, and remained in captivity until the following winter, when he was released.

Prescott. This is the most distinguished name in the annals of Groton, and the families bearing it have been numerous. Jonas, the progenitor, was the son of John and Mary (Platts) Prescott, and was born at Lancaster, in June, 1648. He was a blacksmith by trade, and owned the mill in the south part of Groton, now within the limits of Harvard. It is said that a grant of land made by the town, about the year 1675, when it was much in need of a blacksmith, induced him to remove nearer to the village. He built a house and shop on the lot, which was situated on the easterly side of James's Brook, perhaps a third of a mile south of Lawrence Academy. He bought lands, until he became one of the largest owners of real estate in the town. Two years ago, a piece of wall was removed, which separated a part of this lot from the highway, near where it forks from the Boston road, and which contained a stone bearing this inscription :—

I. P.
1680
Rebuilt by
O. P.
1784
Rebuilt by
S. J. Park
1841.

The initials I. P. are those of Jonas Prescott, and O. P. those of his grandson, Dr. Oliver Prescott.

Jonas married, December 14, 1672, Mary, daughter of John and Mary (Draper) Loker, of Sudbury, and they had four sons and eight daughters. Two of the sons died young, but all the other children lived to grow up and have families. The eight daughters, with one exception, married Groton men, and were blessed with a numerous offspring. Jonas filled many important positions in the town, and represented it in the General Court during the years 1699 and 1705; he died December 31, 1723, aged 75 years.

His youngest son, Benjamin, was a man of strong character and commanding appearance, and like his father filled many places of usefulness. He married, June 11, 1718, Abigail, daughter of the Honorable Thomas and Mary (Wilson) Oliver, of Cambridge, and

they had three sons and four daughters. He lived on the old homestead, where he died August 3, 1735, at the age of 42 years, after a short illness caused by over-exertion while haying. His three sons were all remarkable men, and exerted much influence in shaping public affairs during an important period.

James, the eldest son, represented the town in the General Court, as his father and grandfather had done before him; was a member of the Senate and of the Executive Council. At the beginning of the Revolution, he was a member of the Provincial Congress and of the Board of War, and subsequently Sheriff of Middlesex County, and a Judge of the Court of Common Pleas. He died February 15, 1800, aged 79 years.

William, the second son, settled on a large estate owned by his father, in that part of Groton called the Gore, now included in Pepperell. He was a Lieutenant in the expedition sent in the year 1755 to remove the French Neutrals from Nova Scotia, and a Colonel of Minute Men enrolled in this neighborhood in the year 1774. As commander of the American forces at the Battle of Bunker Hill, June 17, 1775, his name will never be forgotten. In subsequent years, at various times he filled the offices of town clerk, selectman, and representative in the General Court. He was the father of William Prescott, the lawyer and jurist, and the grandfather of William H. Prescott, the distinguished historian. He died October 13, 1795, aged 69 years, and was buried at Pepperell; his widow died October 21, 1821, at the advanced age of 88 years.

On the opposite page is a representation of the monument in the Pepperell Burying Ground, erected to their memory. It consists of a thick slate slab, resting on a solid granite foundation.

Oliver, the third and youngest son, graduated at Harvard College, in the class of 1750, and studied the profession of medicine, in which he afterward had a wide reputation and an extensive practice. He was town clerk during thirteen years, and selectman during thirty-two years. Before the Revolution, he held the respective offices of Major, Lieutenant colonel, Colonel, and General, in the militia. Subsequently, in the year 1778, he was appointed third Major General of the militia, and in 1781 second Major General; but soon afterward he resigned the position, on account of ill health. He was a Justice throughout the Commonwealth, a member of the Board of War, a member of the Council of Massachusetts until he declined the office, and, in the year 1779, was

appointed Judge of Probate, and continued as such until his death. He took an active part in suppressing Shays's Rebellion, which had many supporters in this neighborhood. He was one of the original Trustees of Groton Academy, and the first President of the Board of Trustees. He was a member of the American Academy of Arts and Sciences, and of various medical societies. He died November 17, 1804, aged 73 years.

Sartell. A family of this name settled in Groton about the beginning of the last century. It is said to be distinct from the Sawtells, who were here before them, though it is not improbable that they both came from the same stock. The head of the family was Nathaniel, and he had two sons and two daughters. Nathaniel, the elder son, lived at Charlestown, and was a mariner. He sailed on a voyage, and was never afterward heard from. Josiah, the second son, lived in Groton, and was the last representative of the town to the General Court, under the charter of William and Mary. By his will, dated September 3, 1775, he bequeathed to the town and church three farms and some other property, of which the proceeds constitute the greater part of the present Groton Ministerial Fund. He was buried in the old Burying Ground. Some years ago, his gravestone was taken to the new cemetery, and the following is a copy of the inscription on it:—

JOSIAH SARTELL ESQ.

died Aug^t 30th 1784. aged 74

MARY SARTELL his widow, died

March. 30th 1790. aged 80.

and their Children who died in minority

NATHANIEL SARTELL ESQ. his

father, who died Jan^y 16th 1741. aged 60

ABIGAIL GREEN her sister, who

died Dec^r 20th 1790. aged 83.

and other relations.

From death's arrest no age is free.

Removed from the Old Cemetery to the new by Nathaniel Gillson to the lot of Simeon Gillson.

His widow, Mary, also made a bequest to the church. The following is the first clause in her will, which is dated November 28, 1789, and on file in the Middlesex Probate Office at East Cambridge:—

"I give and bequeath to the first church in the Town of Groton aforesaid my Silver Tankard, and the sum of Fifteen pounds Lawfull money, to be for the use of said Church Forever "

Sawtell. Richard Sawtell, the ancestor of numerous families bearing this name, was an original proprietor of Groton, and the possessor of a twenty-acre right. Two of his sons were also original proprietors, Jonathan having a five-acre right, and Zechariah a ten-acre right. He came here from Watertown, where he was living as early as the year 1636. He was town clerk of Groton in 1662 and the two subsequent years. He died August 21, 1694, at Watertown, where he went, doubtless, in the spring of 1676, after the destruction of this town by the Indians. In his will, dated May 16, 1692, he mentions his wife Elizabeth. She died October 18, 1694. They had a large family, born probably at Watertown, three of whom, Obadiah, Jonathan, and Zechariah, lived at Groton. Obadiah, the eldest, married Hannah, daughter of George Lawrence, had Abigail, born March 13, 1665-6, and probably Obadiah. Jonathan, born August 24, 1639, married, July 3, 1665, Mary —, and had six children, of whom Jonathan, the youngest, was born April 6, 1676, at Watertown. Jonathan, the father, died January 6, 1690-1, and his wife, April 26, 1676, a few days after the birth of her youngest son. Zechariah, born about the year 1644, married —, and had Anna, born March 14, 1673-4, and probably Nathaniel.

This family is largely represented at Charlestown, New Hampshire, where the name is spelled Sartwell. This branch sprang from Obadiah, an early settler of that town, who went from Groton about the year 1740. He was taken prisoner by the Indians, May 24, 1746, and was held until August 20, 1747. He finally met his death at their hands, June 17, 1749, being attacked while ploughing in his cornfield, without suspecting any danger.

In the printed "Journal" of the House of Representatives, June 16, 1738, is found

"A Petition of *Josiah Sartell*, shewing that he was a Soldier in the Service of the Province for sundry Years, and was in divers Fights against the Indian Enemy, wherein many of them were slain, and he himself was wounded in some of the Engagements, that he has received nothing in Consideration of his Smart and Services, but the established Pay, that he has a large Family, and under low Circumstances; that he lately presumed for want of Lands and Means of purchasing, to go upon some of the Province Land on the West side of *Connecticut*

River, adjoining to *Northfield*, a new *Canada Town* and some Farms, has built a small House thereon, and improved some of the Lands there, praying that he may obtain a Grant, or be allowed to purchase such Part of the Province Land there, as the Court shall think convenient in Consideration of the Premisses. Read and Ordered, That the Petition be considered on Tuesday the 20th Instant."

It was voted June 22, that one hundred acres of the unappropriated lands of the Province be granted the petitioner, and, in the record of this date, the name is spelled Joseph Sautell.

In the same "Journal," June 13, 1759, there is

"A Petition of *David Sartwell* of *Groton*, in the County of *Middlesex*, setting forth, that his Son *Abel Sartwell*, went forth in the Expedition against *Canada* the last Year; that near *Half-Way-Brook* (so called) he was in an Engagement with the Enemy, and killed; that his Gun was then lost; he therefore prays the Stoppage may be taken off, and the Treasurer be directed to allow him the *three Pounds* mentioned."

Shattuck. John Shattuck is the ancestor of all the families in Groton and its neighborhood, who bear this name. He was the son of William and Susanna Shattuck, of Watertown, where he himself was born, February 11, 1647. He married, June 20, 1664, Ruth, daughter of John, Jr., and Ruth Whitney, who was born April 15, 1645, at Watertown. About the time of his marriage, lands in Groton were granted him, but it does not appear that he ever was an inhabitant of the town. In King Philip's War, he was a sergeant of a military company raised in Watertown to protect the remote settlements in the Connecticut valley. On one of the marches the company was attacked by the Indians, and more than one half of the command were slain. Sergeant Shattuck was deputed to bear the news of the affair to the Governor of the colony, and, on his way, while crossing the ferry between Charlestown and Boston, September 14, 1675, the boat was sunk, and he was drowned. His widow afterward married Enosh Lawrence. In the year 1678, the date of the re-settlement of the town, Lawrence and his wife removed to Groton, bringing with them the four young children of her first husband, all born at Watertown. They probably occupied the land previously granted to John Shattuck, which was situated in the north part of the town. The children were John, born June 4, 1666, and married Mary, daughter of James and Elizabeth (Longley) Blood; Ruth, born June 24, 1668, and married, probably, Jonathan Farnsworth; William, born September

11, 1670, and married, first, Hannah Underwood, and, secondly, Deliverance Pease; and Samuel, who married Elizabeth Blood, a sister of his brother John's wife.

The eldest of these children, John Shattuck, and his son, John, Jr., a young man in the nineteenth year of his age, were murdered by the Indians, May 8, 1709. They were attacked, as they were crossing the Nashua River, in the vicinity of the Stony Ford-way, near the present site of Hollingsworth's paper mills, while returning from the west side of the river, where Mr. Shattuck owned land.

A remarkable fatality seems to have followed Mrs. Shattuck's kindred. Her husband and eldest son were killed by the Indians, as has just been mentioned. Her father, James Blood, was likewise killed September 13, 1692. So also were her uncle, William Longley, his wife and five children, July 27, 1694, and three other of their children were carried away into captivity at the same time. A distant relative, James Parker, Jr., and his wife were killed in this assault, and their children taken prisoners. Her stepfather, Enoch Lawrence, received a wound in an engagement with the Indians, probably in the same attack of July 27, 1694, which almost wholly prevented him from earning a livelihood for himself and family. The three Tarbell children, who were carried off to Canada by the Indians, June 20, 1707, were cousins of Mrs. Shattuck. John Ames, the father-in-law of her niece, Ruth (Shattuck) Ames, was shot by the savages at the gate of his own garrison, July 9, 1724. And lastly, her son-in-law, Isaac Lakin, the husband of her daughter Elizabeth, was wounded in Lovewell's fight at Pigwacket, May 8, 1725. These calamities covered a period of only one generation, extending from the year 1692 to 1725.

Shepley. This has been a common name in Groton, from an early date. The first settler who bore it, and all his family, excepting a son John, were massacred by the Indians. The sad event took place in the assault on the town, July 27, 1694, when his house was burned, and the boy John carried off into captivity by the savages, and held during several years. The knowledge which he obtained of their language and customs while a prisoner was of much use to him in dealing with them in after-life. Tradition relates that, when buying furs and skins of the Indians, he used to put his foot in one scale of the balance instead of a pound

weight. In the summer of 1704, while he and thirteen other men were reaping in a field at Groton, they were attacked by about twenty Indians. After some skirmishing, Shepley and one of his comrades, Butterfield by name, succeeded in killing one of the assailants, for which act they were allowed each four pounds by the Government. He is the direct ancestor of the late Honorable Ether Shepley, formerly Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of the State of Maine, and of General George F. Shepley, now a Justice of the Circuit Court of the First Circuit of the United States.

John Shepley, who lived at Wenham, was probably the progenitor of the Groton family. He removed to Chelmsford in the year 1656, at the time the Reverend Mr. Fiske took a majority of his church to that town.

Stone. This has been a common name for nearly two centuries, and the families bearing it have lived in the south part of the town. Deacon Simon Stone was an original proprietor, owning an eighteen-acre right. He was the oldest of the children of Deacon Simon and Mary (Whipple) Stone, of Watertown. Perhaps he is the person referred to by Mather (*Magnalia*, vii. 74), who was severely wounded by the Indians, July 4, 1690, at Exeter, New Hampshire. Simon Stone and John Stone, mentioned in the distribution of garrisons, March 17, 1691-2, were probably father and son. Simon married Sarah —, and it is probable that several of his children were born before he came to Groton, as their births are not recorded in the town records. Among these were John and Simon, Jr., who were often chosen town officers; James, a son of Simon, Jr., was a deacon in the church.

Tarbell. Thomas Tarbell, the ancestor of this family, sold his house and land in Watertown in the year 1663, and about the same time removed to Groton. He and Thomas, Jr., were original proprietors of the town, the father owning a twenty-acre right, and the son a six-acre right. The name is sometimes written Tarbole. He married Mary —, and had Elizabeth, born January 5, 1656-7, and William, born February 26, 1658-9, both at Watertown. The names of two other children, Thomas, Jr., and Abigail, do not appear in the town records of Watertown, and they probably were born before he settled in that town. He was one of four men, to whom twenty acres of land were granted by the town of

Groton, in the year 1665, on condition that they should build a grist-mill. At the outbreak of King Philip's War, he went to Charlestown, where he married, for the second time, August 15, 1676, Susanna, widow of John Lawrence, Jr. He died at Charlestown as early as the beginning of 1681, and his widow at the same place, January 5, 1692. Thomas Tarbell, Jr., married, June, 30, 1666, Hannah, daughter of William and Joanna Longley, and had four children. He died in the autumn of 1678, and administration on his estate was granted his widow, December 18, 1678. Thomas Tarbell, 3d, eldest child of the preceding Thomas, married, December 1, 1686, Elizabeth, daughter of Richard and Isabel Blood, and had ten children. He was town clerk of Groton in the years 1704 and 1705. He lived on what is now known as Farmers' Row, a short distance south of the Lawrence Farm. He was probably the "Corp^o Tarboll," who commanded, in the autumn of 1711, one of the eighteen garrisons in the town. Three of his children, Sarah, John, and Zachariah, were carried off by the Indians, June 20, 1707, and never came back to remain. They were picking cherries early one evening—so tradition relates—and were taken before they had time to get down from the tree. They were carried to Canada, where, it would seem, they were treated kindly, as no inducement was strong enough afterward to make them return. The girl was sold to the French, and placed in a convent near Montreal; the boys remained with their captors at Caughnawaga, an Indian village near Montreal, and subsequently married squaws and became chiefs of their tribe. Their case was brought before the Council and House of Representatives, April 20, 1739, in Boston, by Governor Belcher, when he made a speech, in which he said that —

"There are lately come from Canada some Persons that were taken by the Indians from Groton above thirty Years ago, who (its believed) may be induced to return into this Province, on your giving them some proper Encouragement: If this Matter might be effected, I should think it would be not only an Act of Compassion in order to release them from the Errors and Delusions of the Romish Faith; but their living among us might, in Time to come, be of great Advantage to the Province."

The matter was referred to a committee, but no definite result was reached. Nearly forty years after their capture, Governor Hutchinson met them in New York State, and refers to them thus:—

"I saw at Albany two or three men, in the year 1744, who came in with the Indians to trade, and who had been taken at Groton in this, that is called Queen Ann's war. One of them — Tarbell, was said to be one of the wealthiest of the Cagnawaga tribe. He made a visit in his Indian dress and with his Indian complexion (for by means of grease and paints but little difference could be discerned) to his relations at Groton, but had no inclination to remain there." — Hutchinson's "History of Massachusetts," ii. 139.

Some years after this time, these two boys — now grown up to manhood, and occupying the position of chiefs — moved up the St. Lawrence River, accompanied by several others, all with their families, and established the little village of St. Regis.

In the month of July last, I visited the place, and was interested to learn from the parish priest that the descendants of these two boys were among the prominent families of the settlement, where there are perhaps forty persons who bear the name. They keep up in a great measure the same given names that are common among their collateral kindred in this town. While in Montreal, I procured, through the kindness of the Mother Superior at the Congregation of Notre Dame, the record of Sarah's baptism, of which the following is a translation : —

"On Monday, July 23, 1708, the ceremony of baptism was performed on Sarah Tarbell, who was born at Groton in New England, October 9, 1693. Her parents were Thomas Tarbell and Elizabeth Wood, both Protestants, and she was baptized by the minister shortly after her birth. Having been taken by the savages on Monday, June 20, 1707, she was brought to Canada ; she has since been sold and has lived with the Sisters of the Congregation of Notre Dame, established at Lachine, where she abjured her religion on May 1. Her god-father was M. Jacques Urbain Robert de Lamorandière, Secretary of M. l'Intendant ; and her godmother was Madame Marguerite Bonat, wife of M. Étienne Pascaud, the deputy treasurer of the King, in this country.

Her name Sarah has been changed to Marguerite.

[Signed] MG^{TE} BONAT,
PASCAUD,
LAMORANDIÈRE,
MERIEL, PRÊTRE."

Thomas Tarbell, the father of these children, made his will September 26, 1715, which was admitted to probate six weeks later. After making certain bequests to different members of his family, he says : —

"all the rest & residue of my Reall Estate I give to be Equally divided between my three children, John, Zachary, & Sarah Tarbell, upon their return from Captivity, or In Proportion unto any of them that shall return, & the rest, or the parts belonging to them that do not return, shall be Equally divided among the rest of my children."

In the printed "Journal" of the House of Representatives, for April 22, 1746, there is found "A Petition of *William Tarbell of Groton*, a Soldier wounded in the Service of the Province, praying a Consideration therefor." This petitioner was a nephew of the captives.

Tinker. John Tinker, one of the original selectmen appointed by the General Court, was living as early as the year 1643, at Windsor, Connecticut, and afterward at Boston. He was among the first settlers of Lancaster, where he was a selectman and town clerk. At one time he bought of the Government the right to trade in furs at Nashaway [Lancaster] and Groton. He subsequently removed to New London, Connecticut, and died suddenly, in October, 1662, at Hartford.

Winthrop. Deane Winthrop, whose name stands at the head of the earliest list of selectmen appointed by the General Court, was a son of Governor John Winthrop, of Massachusetts, and a native of Groton, England. It was in compliment to him that the name of his birthplace was given to this town. The following letter, written by a distinguished representative of his family, will be read with interest:—

BOSTON, 27 February, 1878.

MY DEAR DR. GREEN,—It would give me real pleasure to aid you in establishing the relations of Deane Winthrop to the town of Groton in Massachusetts. But there are only three or four letters of Deane's among the family papers in my possession, and not one of them is dated Groton. Nor can I find in any of the family papers a distinct reference to his residence there.

There are, however, two brief notes of his, both dated "the 16 of December, 1662," which I cannot help thinking may have been written at Groton. One of them is addressed to his brother John, the Governor of Connecticut, who was then in London, on business connected with the Charter of Connecticut. In this note, Deane says as follows:—

"I have some thoughts of removing from the place that I now live in, into your Colony, if I could lit of a convenient place. The place that I now live in is too little for me, my children now growing up."

We know that Deane Winthrop was at the head of the first Board of Selectmen of Groton a few years earlier, and that he went to reside at Pullen Point, now called Winthrop, not many years after.

I am strongly inclined to think with you that this note of December, 1662, was written at Groton.

Yours very truly,

ROBT. C. WINTHROP.

SAMUEL A. GREEN, M.D.

Witt. John Witt was one of the petitioners for the plantation of Groton ; but he probably never was an inhabitant of the town. As early as the year 1650 he was a resident of Lynn, where he died December 2, 1675.

Woods. Samuel Woods was an original proprietor of Groton, and owned an eleven-acre right. He is the ancestor of most of the families in this neighborhood, bearing the name. Two of his grandchildren, Thomas Woods and Daniel Woods, were with Captain John Lovewell, in his famous fight with the Indians, May 8, 1725, and both were killed. Henry Woods, a great-grandson, was in an expedition up the Kennebec River, in the summer of 1755. At the Battle of Bunker Hill, he was a Major under Colonel William Prescott, and subsequently promoted to a colonelcy ; after the war he was a general of the militia.

SOME INSTANCES OF LARGE FAMILIES AND OF LONG-LIVED PERSONS IN GROTON.

THE following are some instances of large families, reared in Groton, between the years 1700 and 1800. The maiden names of the mothers, so far as they are known, are given within parentheses:—

Robert and Deborah Parker had sixteen children. Ebenezer and Abigail Blood, Joseph and Abigail (Sawtell) Parker, Jonathan and Ruth Farnsworth, and Oliver and Sarah (Tarbell) Farnsworth were blessed, each couple, with families of fourteen children.

Mrs. Joseph Parker, named above, “left two Hundred or upwards of Children & Grandchildren,” according to the inscription on her grave-stone. She died February 19, 1787, in the 90th year of her age.

Jonas and Jemima (Holden) Green were the happy parents of ten children, all born within a period of less than eleven years, and among them were twins and triplets. By a second marriage, Jonas became the father of nine more children.

Elisha and Elizabeth (Adams) Rockwood were favored with thirteen children. Isaac and Priscilla (Dodge) Bowers, John and Ruth Frost, Jonathan and Esther (Shedd) Lawrence, Nathaniel and Elizabeth (Page) Nutting, John and Elizabeth (Nutting) Nutting, Joseph and Mary (Prescott) Stone, Captain John and Molly (Everett) Williams, and Nathaniel and Alice Woods were each the parents of twelve children.

Some remarkable cases of longevity and of regular succession of deaths, in this town, during one year, are given in the Groton “Spirit of the Times,” for July 26, 1848. The list was furnished by Mr. Butler, and is as follows:—

Molly, widow of Amos Stone, died May 13, 1847, aged 94 years and 1 month.

Abigail, widow of John Lawrence, died July 10, 1847, aged 93 years and 9 months.

Mary, widow of John Capell, died September 6, 1847, aged 93 years, 4 months and 25 days.

Major Amos Farnsworth died October 19, 1847, aged 93 years, 6 months and 1 day.

Elizabeth, his widow, died December 11, 1847, aged 90 years, 7 months and 24 days.

Lucy, widow of Deacon Samuel Rockwood, died May 12, 1848, aged 90 years, 8 months and 23 days.

All the above-named persons, with the exception of Mr. and Mrs. Capell, were natives of Groton, and each one of the six descendants was, at the date of death, the oldest person in town.

It is interesting to note the changes that have occurred in baptismal names within a few generations. In the early days of New England, certain names that now sound uncouth to the ear were in common use in every community. They were taken largely from the Bible, which was, perhaps, the only book universally read at that time. Zerubbabel Kemp was living in Groton at the beginning of the last century, and he gave the name to one of his sons, who lived to grow up, notwithstanding the infliction. Memphibosleth Adams was a resident of the west parish of Groton a hundred and fifty years ago, but he spared his own boys. A class of names, common in the last century, and representing abstract qualities, such as Faith, Hope, Charity, Temperance, Prudence, and Virtue, have now entirely disappeared. The good old names of Molly, Polly, Dolly, and Sally are never seen in their original spelling ; Susie is considered a better form than Sukey, and Bessie is preferred to Betty.

The name of Gabriel Lakin, of Groton, was kept up through several generations, and the name of Sibyl was in common use in the same family. John Frost, perhaps a kinsman of the well-known "Jack Frost," had, among his twelve children, a son called Scripture. His eldest daughter was Jemima, and his three youngest were named respectively Tryphena, Patience, and Submit.

Mr. Butler, in the genealogical Appendix to his "History" (page 394), mentions the family of "John Darby and Mary," and in the next page gives that of "John Derbyshire and Mary," as if they were different families. They were, however, undoubtedly one and the same. This view is confirmed by the name of the wife, the dates of the birth of the children, and the tendency in former times to cut words short. Before coming to Groton, John lived at Dunstable, where other children were born. I have seen his signature, and he wrote it Derbyshire.



